‘A Dialogue between the Soul and Body’

The poem is in the form of a dialogue or verbal duel, a tradition dating from the Middle Ages incorporating rhetorical questions and illustrative techniques. The human condition is seen as both complex and hopeless, with the antagonists bound together till death. It is written formally in iambic tetrameter. Other love poems, particularly ‘Clorinda and Damon’ may offer interesting points of comparison.

**Soul:** O, WHO shall from this **dungeon** raise
A soul enslaved so many ways?
With bolts of bones, that fettered stands
In feet, and **manacle**d in hands;
Here **blind**ed with an eye, and there
Deaf with the drumming of an ear;
A soul hung up, as 'twere, in chains
Of nerves, and arteries, and veins;
Tortured, besides each other part,
In a vain head, and double heart?

**Body:** O, who shall me deliver whole,
From bonds of this tyrannic soul?
Which, stretched upright, impales me so
That mine own precipice I go;
And warms and moves this needless frame,
(A fever could but do the same),
And, wanting where its spite to try,
Has made me live to let me die
A body that could never rest,
Since this ill spirit it possessed.

Extended metaphor/conceit sees the Body as a prison. The use of alliteration emphasises the imprisonment and torture of the flesh.

Paradox - the senses do not sharpen the Soul’s experience, but limit it.

Anatomical detail typical of metaphysical imagery also shows contempt for the powers of feeling, and false emotion.

The Body feels restricted by spiritual demands. Note the use of language of pain/illness and torture such as crucifixion. The Body is in danger of falling into sin.

Sense of being forced to live. The paradox lies in the fact the Soul should be good, but here causes pain and trouble. Note the irony of Soul and Body joined but not united, like the state of man after the fall.
Soul: What magic could me thus confine
Within another's grief to pine?
Where, whatsoever it complain,
I feel, that cannot feel, the pain;
And all my care itself employs,
That to preserve which me destroys;
Constrained not only to endure
Diseases, but, what's worse, the cure;
And, ready off the port to gain,
Am shipwrecked into health again.

Body: But Physic yet could never reach
The maladies thou me dost teach;
Whom first the cramp of hope does tear,
And then the palsy shakes of fear;
The pestilence of love does heat,
Or hatred's hidden ulcer eat;
Joy's cheerful madness does perplex,
Or sorrow's other madness vex;
Which knowledge forces me to know,
And memory will not forgo;
What but a soul could have the wit
To build me up for sin so fit?
So architects do square and hew
Green trees that in the forest grew.

Compare with Ariel in *The Tempest*. The spirit is confined by the body, referred to as ‘it’. Qualities of Soul are intellectual, but it must feel the Body’s senses and emotions.

Ironic metaphor - the ‘port’ is Heaven, the ‘shipwreck’ is life. The Soul uses intelligence to preserve the Body, to stay alive, and therefore frustrate its desire for union with God.

The mental anguish of guilt/conscience and varied emotions (hope, fear, love, hate, joy) is worse than physical pain, which can be cured in the body.

Knowledge and memory are seen as functions of the Soul which cause illness in the Body.

Bitterness and contempt in the question? The Body’s essential innocence is betrayed by the soul: the sense of guilt/sin is spiritual, not physical. Final ironic paradox that the soul uses its powers to twist or ‘work’ what is natural and innocent?
‘Ametas and Thestyli making Hay-Ropes’

In Greek pastoral conventions, Thestyli was a nymph, but in this poem both characters are farm labourers in a more English setting. The title may refer to the country dance ‘The Haymakers’ Jig’, a serpentine dance of parting and joining, ending with a kiss. The poem with its setting and themes has a pastoral tone.

This poem could be seen as a companion piece to ‘Clorinda and Damon’. It takes the form of a dialogue between a lover and his mistress and can perhaps be seen as a parallel to ‘Coy Mistress’. ‘Ametas and Thestyli’ has a formal verse structure and rhyme scheme. The quatrains show discord, but the final exchange is shared between the two characters and could be seen as a symbol of the harmony they seem to achieve.

**Ametas**

Think’st Thou that this Love can stand,
Whilst Thou still dost say me nay?
Love unpaid does soon disband:
Love binds Love as Hay binds Hay.

**Thestyli**

Think’st Thou that this Rope would twine
If we both should turn one way?
Where both parties so combine,
Neither Love will twist nor Hay.

**Ametas**

Thus you vain Excuses find,
Which your selve and us delay:
And Love tyes a Womans Mind
Looser than with Ropes of Hay.

**Thestyli**

What you cannot constant hope
Must be taken as you may.

**Ametas**

Then let’s both lay by our Rope,
And go kiss within the Hay
‘Clorinda and Damon’.

The poem is a dialogue in the form of a Spenserian pastoral, a form developed from Elizabethan conventions. Clorinda is a shepherdess, but symbolically represents the female/the flesh. Damon is the shepherd (not to be confused with Damon the Mower) and symbolises the male/spirit.

Clorinda. DAMON, come drive thy flocks this way.
Damon. No: 'tis too late they went astray.
Clorinda. I have a grassy scutcheon spied,
Where Flora blazons all her pride;
The grass I aim to feast thy sheep,
The flowers I for thy temples keep.
Damon. Grass withers, and the flowers too fade.
Clorinda. Seize the short joys then, ere they vade.
Seest thou that unfrequented cave?
Damon. That den?
Clorinda. Love's shrine.
Damon. But virtue's grave.
Clorinda. In whose cool bosom we may lie,
Safe from the sun.
Damon. Not Heaven's eye.
Clorinda. Near this, a fountain's liquid bell
Tinkles within the concave shell.
Damon. Might a soul bathe there and be clean,
Or slake its drought?
Clorinda. What is't you mean?
Damon. These once had been enticing things,
Clorinda, pastures, caves, and springs.
Clorinda. And what late change?
Damon. The other day
Pan met me.
Clorinda. What did great Pan say?
Damon. Words that transcend poor shepherd's skill;
But he e'er since my songs does fill,
And his name swells my slender oat.
Clorinda. Sweet must Pan sound in Damon's note.
Damon. Clorinda's voice might make it sweet.
Clorinda. Who would not in Pan's praises meet?
Chorus. Of Pan the flowery pastures sing,
Caves echo, and the fountains ring.
Sing then while he doth us inspire;
For all the world is our Pan's quire.

Vade, pass away. Lat., vadere.
'Bermudas'

‘Bermudas’ was written about 1653 when Marvell was tutor to Cromwell’s ward. He lived with John Oxenbridge, a Puritan divine who had visited the Bermudas after being deprived of a position at Oxford. The islands of Bermuda were a haven for the persecuted Puritans escaping religious intolerance in England. The poem gives a surprisingly unaustere view of Puritanism. It presents a vision of the innocence and pleasure of a new Garden of Eden and has parallels with Marvell’s own escape in ‘The Garden’. It reflects a turbulent period in political and religious terms.

WHERE the remote Bermudas ride,
In the ocean’s bosom unespied,
From a small boat, that rowed along,
The listening winds received this song:
“What should we do but sing His praise
That led us through the watery maze,
Unto an isle so long unknown,
And yet far kinder than our own?
Where He the huge sea-monsters wracks,
That lift the deep upon their backs;
He lands us on a grassy stage,
Safe from the storms, and prelate’s rage.
He gave us this eternal spring,
Which here enamels every thing,
And sends the fowls to us in care,
On daily visits through the air;
He hangs in shades the orange bright,
Like golden lamps in a green night,
And does in the pomegranates close
Jewels more rich than Ormus shows;
He makes the figs our mouths to meet,
And throws the melons at our feet;
But apples plants of such a price,
No tree could ever bear them twice;
With cedars chosen by His hand,
From Lebanon, He stores the land,
And makes the hollow seas, that roar,
Proclaim the ambergris on shore;
He cast (of which we rather boast)
The Gospel’s pearl upon our coast,
And in these rocks for us did frame
A temple where to sound His name.
Oh! let our voice His praise exalt,
Till it arrive at Heaven’s vault,
Which, thence (perhaps) rebounding, may
Echo beyond the Mexique Bay.”

Thus sung they, in the English boat,
An holy and a cheerful note;
And all the way, to guide their chime,
With falling oars they kept the time.
‘The Garden’

The poem seems to be in Marvell’s own voice, unlike the Mower poems. It takes its attitude from the Platonic ideal, where the pleasures of ambition and society are rejected as imperfect shadows of true happiness. The tone is light and ironic, with conscious wit. The form is rhymed couplets of regular tetrameter, which seems calm, reflective and detached. The critic Empson and others claim the fifth stanza recounts the biblical Fall of Man, which prompts the question: was the biblical apple or fruit a symbol of sensuous surrender, rather than the conventional belief of a desire for knowledge?

How vainly men themselves amaze
To win the palm, the oak, or bays;
And their uncessant labours see
Crowned from some single herb or tree,
Whose short and narrow-verged shade
Does prudently their toils upbraid;
While all flowers and all trees do close
To weave the garlands of repose.

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence, thy sister dear!
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow;
Society is all but rude,
To this delicious solitude.

No white nor red was ever seen
So amorous as this lovely green;
Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,
Cut in these trees their mistress’ name.
Little, alas, they know or heed,
How far these beauties hers exceed!
Fair trees! wheresoe’er your barks I wound
No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passion’s heat,
Love hither makes his best retreat:
The gods who mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race.
Apollo hunted Daphne so,
Only that she might laurel grow,
And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.
What wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine and curious peach
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons as I pass,
Insnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,
Withdraws into its happiness:
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide:
There like a bird it sits and sings,
Then whets and combs its silver wings;
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.

Such was that happy garden-state,
While man there walked without a mate:
After a place so pure and sweet,
What other help could yet be meet!
But 'twas beyond a mortal's share
To wander solitary there:
Two paradises 'twere in one
To live in Paradise alone.

How well the skillful gard'ner drew
Of flowers and herbs this dial new;
Where from above the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run;
And, as it works, th' industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckoned but with herbs and flowers!

A change of tone to one less reflective,
more excited as the poet surrenders to
the world of the senses. The erotic
undertone of the imagery is clear and
there are also elements of the story of
the fall of man. There is a sense of
nature's bounty and man's gluttony.
This stanza is about the body.

This stanza explores the pleasures of
the mind, which seem superior to
physical delights. It needs to be able to
withdraw, and the exploration conceit
shows the power of the imagination.
The last line perhaps suggests both
innocence and wisdom are to be found
in the garden.

The soul casts off the demands of the
body for transcendent, mystical
experiences represented by the conceit
of the bird. It waits for death conscious
only of spiritual beauty. These three
stanzas show the completeness of
man's relationship with the garden, as
it satisfies all aspects of his existence.

The poet describes the Garden of Eden
before Eve: this stresses the weakness
of man. There is humour in the final
definite rejection of the pleasures of
love.

The final stanza returns to the present.
The floral clock shows how a natural
calendar and labour bring sweetness
and contentment, rather than the false
striving for fame and fortune of the
opening of the poem.
‘The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Fawn.’

The poem is a complex allegory of love, suffering, betrayal, cruelty, forgiveness and martyrdom. It can be read as a lament for lost innocence. The tone is allusive and subtle. In form, it is an epicedium (a funeral ode), written in rhyming couplets and tetrameter. It falls firmly in the classical, pastoral style, though the mix of Christian and pagan Graeco-Roman can make interpretation difficult. It is wrong to try to pin down each symbol to only one meaning, but the reader needs to be aware of the complexity. Emblem books, pictures and tapestries all form contemporary visual sources. It may be interesting to compare this with ‘The Gallery.’

**THE wanton troopers** riding by
Have shot my fawn, and it will die.
Ungentle men! they cannot thrive
Who killed thee. Thou ne’er didst alive
Them any harm, alas! nor could
Thy death yet do them any good.
I’m sure I never wished them ill;
Nor do I for all this, nor will:
But, if my simple prayers may yet
Prevail with Heaven to forget
Thy murder, I will join my tears,
Rather than fail. But, O my fears!
It cannot die so. Heaven’s king
Keeps register of everything,
And nothing may we use in vain;
Even beasts must be with justice slain,
Else men are made their deodands.

Though they should wash their guilty hands
In this warm life-blood which doth part
From thine, and wound me to the heart,
Yet could they not be clean; their stain
Is dyed in such a purple grain.
There is not such another in
The world, to offer for their sin.
Unconstant **SYLVIO**, when yet
I had not found him counterfeit,
One morning (I remember well),
Tied in this silver chain and bell,
Gave it to me: nay, and I know
What he said then, I’m sure I do:
Said he, “Look how your huntsman here
Hath taught a fawn to hunt his deer.”
But **SYLVIO** soon had me beguiled;
This wax’d tame, while he grew wild,
And quite regardless of my smart,
Left me his fawn, but took his heart.

The opening statement’s simplicity suggests restrained grief. There is a suggested link to Roundhead troops. Second person familiar form is used for intimacy. The random cruelty of war is emphasised. ‘Troopers’ was a relatively new word - the nymph’s life is disrupted by new words and thoughts, as well as the misery caused by war.

Christian virtue of forgiveness is expressed. Use of human term ‘murder’ stresses the importance of the death: judicial language is typical of wide-ranging metaphysical approach. We have a strong moral view of mankind’s place in the scheme of things. ‘Deodands’ are personal goods forfeit to the crown for an act of murder.

References to blood and stains emphasise the dreadful nature of the crime. There is also an allusion to the crucifixion as the means of redemption. Ironically, if the fawn represents Christ, it fails to redeem the troopers.

The swain/lover is a hunter, not a shepherd. This section develops the idea of the falseness of men, where a gift is merely a seductive technique. The nymph’s voice appears girlish and innocent. ‘Beguiled’ means charmed or diverted. The balance of ideas and play on deer/dear, or heart/hart are perhaps more the intellectual Marvell than the rejected nymph.
Thenceforth I set myself to play
My solitary time away,
With this; and very well content,
Could so mine idle life have spent;
For it was full of sport, and light
Of foot and heart, and did invite
Me to its game; it seemed to bless
Itself in me; how could I less
Than love it? O, I cannot be
Unkind to a beast that loveth me.
Had it lived long, I do not know
Whether it too might have done so
As Sylvio did; his gifts might be
Perhaps as false, or more, than he;
But I am sure, for aught that I
Could in so short a time esp'y,
Thy love was far more better then
The love of false and cruel men.
With sweetest milk and sugar first
I it at mine own fingers nursed
And as it grew, so every day
It waxed more white and sweet than they.
It had so sweet a breath! And oft
I blushed to see its foot more soft
And white, shall I say than my hand?
Nay, any lady's of the land
It is a wondrous thing how fleet
'Twas on those little silver feet;
With what a pretty skipping grace
It oft would challenge me the race;
And, when't had left me far away,
'Twould stay, and run again, and stay;
For it was nimbler much than hinds,
And trod as if on the four winds.
I have a garden of my own,
But so with roses overgrown,
And lilies, that you would it guess
To be a little wilderness;
And all the spring-time of the year
It only loved to be there.
Among the beds of lilies I
Have sought it oft, where it should lie,
Yet could not, till itself would rise,
Find it, although before mine eyes;
For, in the flaxen lilies' shade

The nymph seems to accept her fate
and give herself up to an ideal world of
innocence/childlike simplicity, without
carnal love. ‘Sport’ could refer to
hunting or to amorous meetings.

Effect of the rhetorical question is to
emphasise the innocence of the nymph
compared to the treachery of Sylvio,
and by extension, men.

The nymph speculates on the danger of
losing innocence as life progresses, but
the love of the fawn symbolises purity.
Is this an allegory of the love of Christ,
an innocent love without ulterior
motive? Notice unusual rather tortured
comparative.

Description is full of intimate detail,
like a mother with her child. This
section takes the form of a love poem,
with typical references to whiteness,
softness, grace. Compare with ‘The
Garden’ in its sensuous treatment of
nature.

This is a parallel to the Garden of Virgin
Love, in medieval allegory, but also
provides a link with the imagery of the
‘Song of Songs’ from the Bible. The
flowers are symbolic - lilies symbolising
chastity, virtue, faith, wisdom and
purity. In both Christian and pagan
traditions, lilies symbolise fertility.
Roses symbolise love and remembrance,
and red roses (colour only suggested in
the poem) symbolise passion. The fawn
represents the qualities of non-sexual
love, or a love not sexually awakened;
both complex and beautiful.
The tone is pensive, as the nymph
recalls past happiness.
It like a bank of lilies laid.
Upon the roses it would feed,
Until its lips e’en seem to bleed
And then to me ’twould boldly trip,
And print those roses on my lip.
But all its chief delight was still
On roses thus itself to fill,
And its pure virgin limbs to fold
In whitest sheets of lilies cold:
Had it lived long, it would have been
Lilies without, roses within.
O help! O help! I see it faint
And die as calmly as a saint!
See how it weeps! the tears do come
Sad, slowly, dropping like a gum.
So weeps the wounded balsam; so
The holy frankincense doth flow;
The brotherless Heliades
Melt in such amber tears as these.
I in a golden vial will
Keep these two crystal tears, and fill
It till it do o’erflow with mine,
Then place it in Diana’s shrine.
Now my sweet fawn is vanished to
Whither the swans and turtles go;
In fair Elysium to endure,
With milk-like lambs, and ermines pure.
O do not run too fast: for I
Will but bespeak thy grave, and die.
First, my unhappy statue shall
Be cut in marble; and withal
Let it be weeping too; but there
The engraver sure his art may spare;
For I so truly thee bemoan,
That I shall weep, though I be stone,
Until my tears, still dropping, wear
My breast, themselves engraving there;
There at my feet shalt thou be laid,
Of purest alabaster made;
For I would have thine image be
White as I can, though not as thee.

A sudden change of tone brings us back
to the cruel present from the idyllic past. The Christian view of death is suggested (cf ‘On a Drop of Dew’ or ‘The Resolved Soul’). The imagery makes us think of Christ, whose birth gifts were symbolic of his death. The Heliades were the sisters of Phaeton, who died when he stole his father, the Sun’s, chariot and lost control. His sisters were changed to poplars (or willows in some versions) to weep for their loss. In some versions of the myth they weep tears of amber. Classical and Christian images mix here.

Image of a precious reliquary, as for a saint. Diana is the Roman goddess of hunting.

Turtle doves were emblematic of constancy, forming life-long pairings. Swans often symbolise light and are a popular symbol in Greek mythology. The lamb is a symbol of Christ. In Greek mythology, the Elysian Fields were at the ends of the earth, the place to which favoured heroes, exempted from death, were conveyed by the gods. Christ ascended to Heaven, having risen from the dead.

The nymph’s statue will be like that of Niobe who was turned to stone, weeping at the death of her children. The fawn at her feet will copy the stylistic devices of tombs, which often have a small dog as symbolic of faithfulness. The detail of the statue can be compared with the treatment of the pictures of the mistress in ‘The Gallery’. No homage to the fawn will ever truly reflect its purity.
‘The Gallery’

This is the poetic rendering of a work of art (ecphrasis) following Horace’s statement that ‘poetry and painting are alike’. It follows the pattern of an Italian poet, Marino. The pictures are a conceit of love, being courtly and controlled, following accepted ‘stances’ from the mistress. There is none of the passion found in ‘To his Coy Mistress.’ By the end, the lover seems no further on in his relationship, there is no real analysis of emotion, remaining essentially an artifice or game.

The poem is written in tetrameter, 8 line stanzas, rhyming couplets, so the formality is established through rigid pattern of verse.

CHLORA, come view my soul, and tell
Whether I have contrived it well:
Now all its several lodgings lie,
Composed into one gallery,
And the great arras-hangings, made
Of various facings, by are laid,
That, for all furniture, you'll find
Only your picture in my mind.

Poem is framed as invitation to the mistress through the use of a courtly pose - stylised rather than passionate. The soul equates to the picture gallery.

The old-fashioned tapestries (perhaps suggestive of old loves) have been removed to leave room for visions of Chlora- exclusive adoration.

Here thou art painted in the dress
Of an inhuman murderess;
Examining upon our hearts,
(Thy fertile shop of cruel arts.)
Engines more keen than ever yet
Adornèd tyrant's cabinet,
Of which the most tormenting are,
Black eyes, red lips, and curlèd hair.

Picture 1. This is the first of a contrasting pattern of stanzas showing an alternately cruel and kind mistress. The images of torture are balanced by conventional themes of love poetry. Dark colours linked to passion and love.

But, on the other side, thou'rt drawn,
Like to AURORA in the dawn;
When in the east she slumbering lies,
And stretches out her milky thighs,
While all the morning quire does sing,
And manna falls and roses spring,
And, at thy feet, the wooing doves
Sit perfecting their harmless loves.

Picture 2. A clear contrast establishes different moods of the mistress. The classical subject is erotic. The pose is fixed, without the urgency of ‘To his Coy Mistress’. The language of love is soft and yielding, in contrast to the torture of previous stanza. The colours are also more muted.
Like an enchantress here thou show'st,
Vexing thy restless lover's ghost;
And, by a light obscure, dost rave
Over his entrails, in the cave,
Divining thence, with horrid care,
How long thou shalt continue fair;
And (when informed) them throw'st away
To be the greedy vulture's prey.

But, against that, thou sitt'st afloat,
Like VENUS in her pearly boat;
The halcyons, calming all that's nigh,
Betwixt the air and water fly;
Or, if some rolling wave appears,
A mass of ambergris it bears,
Nor blows more wind than what may well
Convoy the perfume to the smell.

These pictures, and a thousand more,
Of thee, my gallery doth store,
In all the forms thou canst invent,
Either to please me, or torment;
For thou alone, to people me,
Art grown a numerous colony,
And a collection choicer far
Than or Whitehall's, or Mantua's were.

But of these pictures, and the rest,
That at the entrance likes me best,
Where the same posture and the look
Remains with which I first was took;
A tender shepherdess, whose hair
Hangs loosely playing in the air,
Transplanting flowers from the green hill,
To crown her head and bosom fill.

Picture 3. The mistress is seen as using magic to foretell her future and how long her beauty will last. Again, a classical setting is used. We see she is careless of men, using them for her ends then discarding them. Emotive language stresses the helplessness of the lover.

Picture 4. Again the contrast is pointed. The picture is reminiscent of Botticelli’s ‘Birth of Venus’, calm and supremely beautiful. Halcyons are kingfishers, emblematic of peace. Ambergris is a perfumed fatty substance found in whales, the base for many exotic perfumes and said to be an aphrodisiac. The overall effect is of a calmly sensuous experience.

The sheer quantity of images suggests the depth of his love and contemplation of her. The word ‘invent’ stresses the falseness of her behaviour. It is part of the courtly ritual of love, balancing tyranny and gentleness. The conceit from exploration and colonisation may remind us of ‘The Bermudas’. Charles I’s fine collection of paintings was sold by Parliament after his execution. Mantua was an Italian court known for artistic patronage.

Picture 5. The final stanza gives us a sense of constant re-evaluation, suggesting that the start of his love was with a simple view of the woman, which appears artless, but is part of the pastoral tradition; it may be as artificial as the other poses, despite the simple image which closes the poem.
‘The Mower, against Gardens.’

The poem deals with the natural man warning against the falseness of sophistication, here represented by formal gardens, developed through the elaborate conceit to include courtly life and artifice. The Mower with his scythe is at once ravisher, killer and procreator - an active man. We are shown the conflict between wild, natural sensuality and the restrictive demands of society and civilisation.

Compared to the other Mower poems, this might seem more philosophical, less self-absorbed. The conceits/images are drawn from contemporary 17th century horticultural practice. There are clear links to the idea of Eden and the Fall: here the garden has also ‘fallen’. Consider whether the concluding couplet suggests an innate morality, not linked to any religious system or philosophy.

LUXURIOUS man, to bring his vice in use,
Did after him the world seduce,
And from the fields the flowers and plants allure,
Where Nature was most plain and pure.

He first inclosed within the gardens square
A dead and standing pool of air,
And a more luscious earth for them did knead,
Which stupefied them while it fed.

The pink grew then as double as his mind;
The nutriment did change the kind.
With strange perfumes he did the roses taint;
And flowers themselves were taught to paint.

The tulip white did for complexion seek,
And learned to interline its cheek;
Its onion root they then so high did hold,
That one was for a meadow sold:

Another world was searched through oceans new,
To find the marvel of Peru;

Introduces the concept of sexuality, licentiousness, rather than our modern usage.

Mix of tetrameter and pentameter, rhymed couplets - formal and controlled.

Unnatural colours, like women in make-up.

Post Eden sinfulness and images of sexual corruption introduced by man into natural world.

Walled garden - nature no longer free but confined by man. Composted soil is over-rich.

Flowers changed through selective breeding are spoiled by man.

Craze for tulips in 17th century led to wild prices. Exotic plants were brought back from the newly-explored Americas.

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Craze for tulips in 17th century led to wild prices. Exotic plants were brought back from the newly-explored Americas.
And yet these rarities might be allowed
To man, that sovereign thing and proud,
Had he not dealt between the bark and tree,
Forbidden mixtures there to see.
No plant now knew the stock from which it came:
He grafts upon the wild the tame,
That the uncertain and adulterate fruit
Might put the palate in dispute.
His green seraglio has its eunuchs too,
Lest any tyrant him outdo;
And in the cherry he does Nature vex,
To procreate without a sex.
'Tis all enforced, the fountain and the grot,
While the sweet fields do lie forgot,
Where willing Nature does to all dispense
A wild and fragrant innocence;
And fauns and fairies do the meadows till
More by their presence than their skill.
Their statues polished by some ancient hand,
May to adorn the gardens stand;
But, howsoe'er the figures do excel,
The Gods themselves with us do dwell.
‘A Dialogue, between The Resolved Soul, and Created Pleasure’.

This forms a poetic dialogue after the tradition of the Middle Ages. It incorporates Puritan philosophy, though the Choric verses suggest it may have been intended to be set to music.

There is conflict between the two voices, Pleasure representing emotion and the senses, while the Soul represents reason. A greater sense of harmony prevails than can be seen in the ‘Dialogue between the Soul and Body’ which is characterised by bitterness.

During this whole dialogue, there is a parallel to the temptation of Christ, where the pleasures of the world were laid out for him. Though the pleasures of the senses may seem harmless, they divert the Soul from its direct course towards God. The situation throughout is dramatic and full of conflict, yet with the careful patterning of a morality play.

COURAGE, my soul! now learn to wield
The weight of thine immortal shield;
Close on thy head thy helmet bright;
Balance thy sword against the fight;
See where an army, strong as fair,
With silken banners spreads the air!
Now, if thou be'st that thing divine,
In this day's combat let it shine,
And show that Nature wants an art
To conquer one resolvèd heart.

**Pleasure:** Welcome the creation's guest,
Lord of earth, and Heaven's heir!
Lay aside that warlike crest,
And of Nature's banquet share;
Where the souls of fruits and flowers
Stand prepared to heighten yours.

**Soul:** I sup above, and cannot stay,
To bait so long upon the way.

**Pleasure:** On these downy pillows lie,
Whose soft plumes will thither fly:
On these roses, strowed so plain
Lest one leaf thy side should strain.
**Soul:** My gentler rest is on a thought,  
Conscious of doing what I ought.

**Pleasure:** If thou be'st with perfumes pleased,  
Such as oft the gods appeased,  
Thou in fragrant clouds shalt show,  
Like another god below.

**Soul:** A soul that knows not to presume,  
Is Heaven's, and its own, perfume.

**Pleasure:** Everything does seem to vie  
Which should first attract thine eye:  
But since none deserves that grace,  
In this crystal view thy face.

**Soul:** When the Creator's skill is prized,  
The rest is all but earth disguised.

**Pleasure:** Hark how music then prepares  
For thy stay these charming airs,  
Which the posting winds recall,  
And suspend the river's fall.

**Soul:** Had I but any time to lose,  
On this I would it all dispose.  
Cease, tempter! None can chain a mind,  
Whom this sweet cordage cannot bind.

**Chorus:** Earth cannot show so brave a sight,  
As when a single soul does fence  
The batteries of alluring sense,  
And Heaven views it with delight.  
Then persevere; for still new charges sound,  
And if thou overcom'st thou shalt be crowned.

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Puritan response: duty not pleasure.

Smell is represented as next stage in the debate, using rhetoric. The comparison with gods suggests an element of pride, a factor in the fall of man and another deadly sin.

Terse reply showing resistance.

Sight. Draws on pride, the gravest of the deadly sins. Classical links to Narcissus and biblical link to Lucifer.

Ref. to Book of Common Prayer and Catholic Ash Wednesday service: ‘remember, Man, that thou art dust…’

Note the sense of immediacy and drama. Sound is represented as having the power to delay.

The first point at which the Soul wavers. It sees the danger of wasting time, in a different context to ‘Coy Mistress’, though linguistically similar. Note the pun of ‘cordage’ (ropes) and chords of music.

Entrance of the Chorus reinforces resolution of the Soul but warns against future temptations. Promises heavenly reward for steadfastness.
**Pleasure:** All that's costly, fair, and sweet,
Which scatteringly doth shine,
Shall within one beauty meet,
And she be only thine.

**Soul:** If things of sight such heavens be,
What heavens are those we cannot see?

**Pleasure:** Wheresoe'er thy foot shall go
The minted gold shall lie,
Till thou purchase all below,
And want new worlds to buy.

**Soul:** We'ret not for price who'd value gold?
And that's worth naught that can be sold.

**Pleasure:** Wilt thou all the glory have
That war or peace commend?
Half the world shall be thy slave,
The other half thy friend.

**Soul:** What friend, if to my self untrue?
What slaves, unless I captive you?

**Pleasure:** Thou shalt know each hidden cause,
And see the future time;
Try what depth the centre draws,
And then to Heaven climb.

**Soul:** None thither mounts by the degree
Of knowledge, but humility.

**Chorus:** Triumph, triumph, victorious soul!
The world has not one pleasure more:
The rest does lie beyond the pole,
And is thine everlasting store.

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- Love/sex/lust (deadly sin) represented through faithful and alluring mistress.
- A dismissive tone. Rhetorical questions and repetition show unwillingness to yield.
- Wealth (greed - deadly sin) relies on artifice, but also suggests a limit/shallowness to earthly pleasures. Contemporary expeditions to the New World often brought back riches. Insatiable.
- Rhetorical question and response. Futility of pursuit of wealth.
- Power. Echoes of Matthew chapter 4 verses 8 and 9, the promise of all the kingdoms.
- A soul enslaved to pleasure loses the way to God. The double question shows the strength of the debate.
- Knowledge/intellect. Fruit of the tree of knowledge was Eve's temptation.
- Certainty of this final statement defeats all of pleasure's arguments. We must be humble to enter heaven.
- The double accolade in this choric ending suggests the final reward for a soldier of Christ. The formal pattern is iambic, sounding serious yet celebratory.
‘The Mower to the Glo-Worms’

This poem can be seen as a companion piece to ‘Damon the Mower’ and ‘The Mower’s Song’. The four stanzas are quatrains, in tetrameter. It continues the theme of the simplicity of the natural world, in contrast to the despair of the Mower, whose world is changed/unsettled by love. The scene is set when the working day is complete, later than the setting of other poems in the group.

i
Ye living Lamps, by whose dear light
The Nightingale does sit so late,
And studying all the Summer-night,
Her matchless Songs does meditate;

Almost whimsical in approach as the Mower addresses living creatures anthropomorphically.

ii
Ye Country Comets, that portend
No War, nor Princes funeral,
Shining unto no higher end
Then to presage the Grasses fall;

Alliteration stresses their humble aspect. Plays on beliefs that such phenomena were omens of significant events to come.

iii
Ye Glo-worms, whose officious Flame
To wandring Mowers shows the way,
That in the Night have lost their aim,
And after foolish Fires do stray;

Doing their duty - a positive connotation. Plural, not the solitary figure of Damon. ‘ignis fatuus’ or misleading ideas/things is this symbolic of unrequited love?

iv
Your courteous Lights in vain you wast,
Since Juliana here is come,
For She my Mind hath so displac’d
That I shall never find my home.

Final purpose held till last line. Makes the appeal more complex as his life has become. His mind is preoccupied with love.
‘The Unfortunate Lover’

This poem is more fanciful than ‘The Gallery’ or ‘To his Coy Mistress’, because there is no woman in the poem except the mother; the lover is a ‘type’, not a real person. The conceits take in emblem books, astronomy, medical and surgical ideas, the weather, classical myth, natural history, military exploits, heraldry. The range suggests the poem was written with literary readers in mind.

ALAS! how pleasant are their days,  
With whom the infant love yet plays!  
Sorted by pairs, they still are seen  
By fountains cool and shadows green;  
But soon these flames do lose their light,  
Like meteors of a summer's night;  
Nor can they to that region climb,  
To make impression upon Time.

’Twas in a shipwreck, when the seas  
Ruled, and the winds did what they please,  
And, ere brought forth, was cast away;  
Till at the last the master wave  
Upon the rock his mother drave,  
And there she split against the stone,  
In a Cæsarian section.

The sea him lent these bitter tears,  
Which at his eyes he always bears,  
And from the winds the sighs he bore,  
Which through his surging breast do roar;  
No day he saw but that which breaks  
Through frighted clouds in forkèd streaks,  
While round the rattling thunder hurled,  
As at the funeral of the world.

While Nature to his birth presents  
This masque of quarrelling elements,  
A numerous fleet of cormorants black,  
That sailed insulting o'er the wrack,  
Received into their cruel care,  
The unfortunate and abject heir;  
Guardians most fit to entertain  
The orphan of the hurricane.

Sense of melancholy/regret from the opening word. He was once in the position he describes. Examines the natural order and settings traditionally associated with love. Recognises transitory nature of love.

Narrative style is based around a shipwreck, suggesting trying times/relationships. The child begins life in harsh conditions, is this a symbol of struggles to come? The rhyme at the end provides humour through being forced and awkward, like the lover. Possibly also mocking attempts at wooing through poetry where form is forced to fit meaning. In classical mythology Venus is born from the sea, though here the birth is less romantic.

Conventional descriptions of lovers’ trials are overturned. All his experiences are coloured by great passions, similar to the storms of the natural world. The strength of emotion is apparent from the final line.

The masque was a formal court entertainment, reserved for births, marriage. Images of cormorants often appeared in heraldry. Both suggest high birth. Is this mocking when compared with the description of his birth? Alliteration emphasises harsh conditions of his life. The adoption of a child by animals has echoes of Greek/Roman mythology.
They fed him up with hopes and air,
Which soon digested to despair,
And as one cormorant fed him, still
Another on his heart did bill;
Thus, while they famish him and feast,
He both consumèd, and increased,
And languishèd with doubtful breath,
The amphibiun of life and death.

And now, when angry Heaven
Would Behold a spectacle of blood,
Fortune and he are called to play
At sharp before it all the day,
And tyrant Love his breast does ply
With all his wingèd artillery,
Whilst he, betwixt the flames and waves,
Like Ajax, the mad tempest braves.

See how he nak'd and fierce does stand,
Cuffing the thunder with one hand,
While with the other he does lock,
From which he with each wave rebounds,
Torn into flames, and ragg'd with wounds;
And all he says, a lover drest
In his own blood does relish best.

This is the only banneret
That ever Love created yet;
Who, though by the malignant stars,
Forcèd to live in storms and wars,
Yet dying, leaves a perfume here,
And music within every ear;
And he in story only rules,
In a field sable, a lover gules.
The Mower’s Song

The poem can be linked with ‘Damon the Mower’. The regular tetrameters in rhyming couplets echo the steady rhythm of the mower’s work. The use of the refrain and longer final line break this rhythm and emphasise the mower’s constant thought. The tone is personal - we hear the direct voice of the Mower. Mowing can be seen as destructive, since it cuts down, yet also provides opportunity for new growth and natural development.

I.
MY mind was once the true survey
Of all these meadows fresh and gay,
And in the greenness of the grass
Did see its hopes as in a glass;
When JULIANA came, and she,
What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me.

Gives a sense of Mower’s lost hope. His idealism was reflected in the beauty of the natural landscape. Simplicity of life before love. The final couplet compares his treatment at the hands of Juliana to what he does to the meadow.

II.
But these, while I with sorrow pine,
Grew more luxuriant still and fine,
That not one blade of grass you spied,
But had a flower on either side;
When JULIANA came, and she,
What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me.

Language suggests his longing/pining for love. The natural world seems to mock him as it flourishes while he remains affected by Juliana’s treatment of him. Natural world is resilient.

III.
Unthankful meadows, could you so
A fellowship so true forego,
And in your gaudy May-games meet,
While I lay trodden under feet?
When JULIANA came, and she,
What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me?

Tone of question suggests his annoyance at nature’s lack of empathy with him. Almost as though nature’s bounty is an insult while he is lovelorn. Repetition of final couplet suggests power that Juliana has over him and the continual rejection he suffers.

IV.
But what you in compassion ought,
Shall now by my revenge be wrought;
And flowers, and grass, and I, and all,
Will in one common ruin fall;
For JULIANA comes, and she,
What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me.

Seeks to gain satisfaction by destroying meadow as punishment for lack of fellow-feeling he feels he was owed. Elaborate metaphysical conceit. Change to present tense in final couplet adds sense of immediacy to his feelings.

V.
And thus, ye meadows, which have been
Companions of my thoughts more green,
Shall now the heraldry become
With which I shall adorn my tomb;
For JULIANA came, and she,
What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me.

Self pitying and melodramatic tone. Will line his tomb with flowers. Symbolic of his pain at unrequited love that taunt him with memories of carefree times. Final couplet returns to past tense showing how he feels

18.—Gaudy, joyful.
Suggested tasks and approaches

1. Some critics have claimed that ‘Clorinda and Damon’ is a piece of Puritan propaganda. How does your reading of the poem and your knowledge of Marvell support or refute this?

2. Is ‘The Mower to the Glo-Worms’ a picture of an Eden disturbed by the fall? Has knowledge of love and sex removed the innocence of ‘thoughts more green’? Compare with ‘The Garden’.

3. How is the natural world used in ‘The Mower’s song’? Do we sympathise with the Mower or reject his self-centredness? How are the life cycle, sexuality, growth and death combined?

4. How does nature mirror the feelings of the protagonist in ‘The Mower to the Glo-Worms’ and ‘The Mower’s Song’?

Compare...

- the presentation of the lover in ‘The Unfortunate Lover’ and ‘The Gallery’.
- the tone of ‘A Dialogue between the Soul and the Body’ and ‘A Dialogue, between The Resolved Soul, and Created Pleasure’.
- The methods used to cajole the female characters in ‘Ametas and Thystylis making Hay-Ropes’ with ‘Clorinda and Damon’.
- the presentation of the natural world in ‘The Mower, Against Gardens’ and ‘Bermudas’.